

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 11 are amended. Claims 1 and 11 are amended to clarify the features of the claims. Thus, no new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Grant in the February 23 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Office Action's indication that claims 2-6, 8, 10, 12-16, 18 and 20 include allowable subject matter.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 7, 9, 11, 17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,072,902 to Myers. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As agreed during the personal interview, Myers does not disclose an image processing apparatus that includes "image storage memory that stores one or more additional images, "a judging unit," and "a synthesizing unit that selects the additional image ... and adds the additional image to the input image," as recited in amended independent claim 1; or the step of "storing one or more additional images," "judging the characteristic of the input image," "selecting the additional image" and "adding the additional image to the input image," as recited in amended independent claim 11.

Myers, instead, discloses a color matching method that requires the generation of look-up tables. See, e.g., Myers, col. 4, lines 30-34. The look-up tables are generated by

printing only a few color swatches, and one color table is generated for each available printer ink. See, e.g., Myers, col. 4, lines 51-54.

In contrast, the claimed image processing apparatus and method includes an "image storage memory that stores one or more additional images," and "a synthesizing unit that selects the additional image from the storage image memory based on the characteristic of input image judged." Nowhere does Myers disclose the claimed "additional images." Myers merely discloses "color swatches" which are not added to an input image as in the claimed image processing apparatus and method.

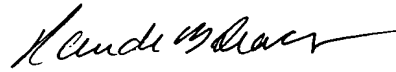
Therefore, as agreed during the personal interview, the claimed image processing apparatus and method is different from and would not be anticipated by Myers. Thus, claims 1 and 11, and the claims dependent therefrom, are patentable over Myers. Withdrawal and reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-20 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Randi B. Isaacs
Registration No. 56,046

JAO:RBI/ale

Date: February 24, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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